

prides its freedom and how our determination can accomplish any tasks and defeat any foe. And these accomplishments of the Greatest Generation serve as an inspiration to us all.

OUR NATION'S FISCAL CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today once again to express my disappointment with the lack of attention to our Nation's fiscal crisis. The system is broken, plain and simple. We need to focus our efforts on finding a cure for our addiction to deficit spending in this body.

The Blue Dog Coalition, which I am a proud member of, has been a leading voice in Congress on fiscal responsibility for over a decade. Recently the Blue Dogs have posted signs in front of all of our offices that explain to everyone exactly how bad the fiscal crisis is, an example of which is on my right here.

We update the numbers on these signs every day. The sad part is that our Nation's debt is increasing so fast that by the end of each day, these signs are inaccurate. As you can see from the sign, today the National debt is at \$7,755,874,000 or \$27,000-plus per person. Ladies and gentlemen, these numbers are appalling.

The Blue Dogs are dedicated to fighting our Nation's ballooning national debt, and we will continue to lead the fight for fiscal sanity until Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle and the White House realize that we cannot continue to run our Nation deeper and deeper into the deficit hole.

There is no secret that our National debt is out of control, as we are expected to run another \$427 billion deficit in 2005, with more deficits projected into the future. We do not even have a firm grip, ladies and gentlemen, on where our money is going. At the Department of Defense, for example, only 6 of 63 departments are able to produce a clean audit. That is less than 10 percent.

This budget we passed omits so many major expenses that frankly it is a sham. The administration essentially cooked the books using Enron-style accounting and Congress is just blindly going along with the program.

We all know as well that foreign holdings of U.S. debt is on the rise. Interest on the national debt is the fastest growing area of our budget. And the trade deficit is totally out of control as well.

As this happens, what are we doing? Ladies and gentlemen, we are doing absolutely nothing. Recently the Blue Dogs introduced a 12-step reform program to cure our Nation's addiction to deficit spending. It requires a balanced budget, stops Congress from buying on credit, and puts a lid on spending.

We have a provision in this plan that requires pay-as-you-go budgeting, so

that when we have an increase in the budget, or we have a tax decrease, we have to offset them. The principles in this 12-step reform plan should be able to be agreed on by everyone. The plan injects a little common sense into the way Congress and the White House does business.

I hope that some day this Congress will wake up and help us restore our fiscal responsibility as a Nation. The time to stop digging the hole deeper is now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GOHMERT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING JUDGE ANDREW L. JEFFERSON, JR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, often we do rise on the floor of the House to begin a debate that may not end itself in a positive outcome. It is not often that you have the opportunity to raise and salute an outstanding member of your community knowing that his life is already exhibited a positive outcome, and, of course, we honor him as he still lives.

My friend and our friend, and the friend of Houston and Texas and the Nation, Judge Andrew Jefferson, brings me to the floor this evening. And I am delighted to be able to rise this evening to honor a great legal scholar, as well as a great institution of legal education located in the 18th Congressional District of Texas. The institution about which I speak is the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University, established in 1947, and the scholar and friend is Judge Andrew L. Jefferson, Jr.

At a time when the future of Houston's public school system is in jeopardy, I am especially pleased to deliver this statement in honor of a scholar and a product of our own Jack Yates High School.

On Friday, May 6, 2005, I will join my constituents and friends to honor Judge Jefferson on the establishment of an endowment for trial advocacy in his name, the first endowed chair, called the Andrew L. Jefferson endowment for trial advocacy, at Texas Southern University, the Thurgood Marshall School of Law in Houston, Texas.

I wish all of us had the opportunity to meet this distinguished gentleman. He is truly distinguished, regal in his build, deep in his commitment. The Honorable Andrew L. Jefferson, a native of Dallas, Texas, graduated from the University of Texas School of Law in 1959 after earning his Bachelor's de-

gree from Texas Southern University, was president of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, and became a partner with Washington and Jefferson, attorneys at law in Houston, Texas.

He served as an assistant criminal district attorney for Bexar Country, a chief assistant United States Attorney for the Western District of Texas, and a trial counsel and labor relations counsel for Humble Oil and Refining Company.

Each time he was a pioneer, he explored new ground, and certainly as an African American, getting his degrees in the late 1950s, going through the 1960s before the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and 1965, the Voting Rights Act, he truly braved new areas and stood for the dignity and respect of all, all in our community.

Judge Jefferson served in the judge advocate general corps in the U.S. Army Reserve where he is honorably discharged as a captain. He has as his lovely bride, another civic leader, his wife, Mary Jefferson, who I have the pleasure of serving with on a number of organizations. She believes in education. She advocates for quality education for our young people, and promotes the opportunities for young people to go to college.

In 1970, Judge Jefferson was appointed to preside over the Court of Domestic Relations number 2 for Harris County. In 1974, he was elected to Judge of the 208th District Court. That too was one of the many firsts in his career, but as well, he is one of the first African Americans to serve on that court.

He decided to reenter the active practice of law in 1975, and was admitted to the United States Court of Appeals for Fifth, Sixth and Eleventh Circuits, and the Supreme Court of the United States of America. A long time active committee member of the State bar, Judge Andrew L. Jefferson is a fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation, a member of American Bar Foundation, the Texas Trial Lawyer's Association, Texas Constitutional Revision Commission. He is an outstanding jurist, and even after he left the bench, he was constantly requested to give his expertise on broad legal issues.

He represented many of the underserved and unempowered. He became active in many organizations and particularly the National Bar Association, the Family Law Institute, where he was asked to speak many, many times. He was an arbitrator, he was a mediator. He had the ability to bring people together. And so a lot of his practice developed around that on the domestic court.

But, he was skilled as a jurist, and as an advocate, but his personality was one that was firm but understanding. He served, of course, in the Houston Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank, and he was respected by presidents, both Democrats and Republicans. He received many honors and awards: The Anti-Defamation League National